



SALEHURST & ROBERTSBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SALEHURST & ROBERTSBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL **MONDAY 15 JUNE 2026, YOUTH CENTRE, ROBERTSBRIDGE. 7.30PM**

Present: Cllr Mark Hamilton; Cllr Sean O'Hara; Cllr David Todd (Chairman)

Also in Attendance: Mrs Karen Ripley (Clerk); Mrs Gill Colquhoun (Asst. Clerk); Cllr Paul Redstone (ESCC)

General Public: None **Press:** None **Presiding:** Cllr David Todd

Public Questions and Comments – there were no members of the public present.

- 16) **APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE** - apologies for absence were received and approved for Cllr Fran Dulley; Cllr Gaynor Leeves; Cllr Simon Longhurst; Cllr Natalie Bishop. Apologies were also received from District Cllr Sue Prochak, who was attending a Rother District Council meeting in Bexhill.
- 17) **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – none.
- 18) **APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION** – none.
- 19) **MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2026** – the Chairman was authorised to sign the Minutes as a correct record of the meeting. It was resolved to consider any matters arising from them at the next full council meeting on 20 July 2026.
- 20) **RFO / FWG REPORT** – the report was received and noted; recommendations were considered under items 21 – 23 below.
- 21) **ASSET REGISTER** – the Clerk advised that an error (item included twice) picked up by FWG had been amended. The Internal Auditor had agreed the correction, which is reflected in the document published and presented here for approval. Members approved the statement of assets of £356,384 as at 31/3/26 (figure included in Box 9 of the AGAR – see 23c below).

22) FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 25/26 –

- a) Year-End 25/26 budget position** – a Member questioned the level of reserves held. The Chairman that councils are expected to hold three to twelve months net revenue expenditure in general funds for reserves, to cover emergencies and unexpected costs. This does not include earmarked reserves, which are held for specific projects or known liabilities (e.g., elections, asset replacement, capital projects). We currently hold £46,444 of general reserves (approximately five-six months). The Chairman also advised that the FWG will table a Reserves Policy for consideration / approval at the next Council Meeting. As recommended by the FWG, all movements to earmarked funds, year-end surplus / carry-forward details, and reserves statement were approved for the year ended 31 March 2026.
- b) Income & Expenditure Account, Balance Sheet, and Bank Reconciliation** – as recommended by the FWG, the documents for the year ended 31 March 2026 were approved and the RFO and Chairman were authorised to sign the Balance Sheet.

23) ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 25/26 Part 3 (Smaller Authorities)

- a) Internal Audit 25/26** – Members received and noted the Report - Page 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, which confirmed that all relevant internal control objectives have been met. A more detailed written report, which could include recommendations, is expected and when received will be considered by the FWG and reported to the next full council meeting on 20 July 2026.
- b) Section 1: Annual Governance Statement by Councillors** - all assertions (1-10) were considered by Members and 1-8 and 10 answered positively (assertion 9 is not applicable). The Chairman and Clerk were authorised to complete and sign Section 1 of the AGAR, ready for submission to the External Auditor.
- c) Section 2: Accounting Statements** - the figures as completed / signed by the Responsible Financial Officer from the financial statements of the Council (item 22b above) were considered and approved; the Chairman was authorised to sign Section 2 of the AGAR, ready for submission to the External Auditor.

24) APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDITORS 26/27

- a) Internal Auditor** – a new Internal Auditor will need to be appointed for the current year 26/27. The RFO will investigate alternative options and the FWG will look at them, with a view to bringing to full council for approval.

b) External Auditor – the 26/27 is the last audit year of the current (five-year) contract for P K Littlejohn. The Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments (SAAA) is responsible for appointing External Auditors and we will be notified in due course who it will be.

- 25) Trees in Church Lane** – Members discussed the size / condition of trees in Church Lane (on the verge from the roundabout running adjacent to Andrews Close) and considered a suggestion by East Sussex County Council (owner) at the Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) meeting in January, that the Parish Council (PC) may wish to pay to maintain them. The Clerk shared a map marking trees within the Parish, some of which are Highways responsibility and some private residential properties, which the PC has previously received complaints about / requests to maintain (from residents). The PC could not take them all on and could not favour any above others. Householders are permitted to cut back any branches overhanging their property. Members agreed that the Parish council does **not** wish to take responsibility for, or pay for maintenance for, the trees in Church Lane. This will be reported back at the next SLR meeting in July.

The meeting closed at: 8.02pm

Chairman.....

Date.....